



# CZECH REPUBLIC

## **Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic to the United Nations**

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Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court  
22<sup>nd</sup> session

General Debate

**Statement by**

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**Alternate Head of Delegation**

**Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic to the United Nations**

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Madam President,

The Czech Republic fully aligns itself with the statement made by Spain on behalf of the European Union and its Member States and wishes to add some remarks in its national capacity.

Let me start with expressing our gratitude to the outgoing President of the Assembly, Ms. Silvia Fernández de Gurmendi, for her outstanding work on behalf of the States Parties. Our thanks go also to the both Vice-Presidents, H. E. Ms. Kateřina Sequensová and H. E. Mr. Bob Rae and all Bureau members.

On this occasion, the Czech Republic congratulates H. E. Ms. Päivi Kaukoranta on her election as the President of the Assembly for the next term, as well as both the newly elected Vice-Presidents, and wishes the new Presidency all the success in their challenging mission. You can count on our support.

The Czech Republic further expresses its sincere appreciation for the work of the outgoing Judges and we congratulate the newly elected Judges. We wish to express our thanks to Judge Piotr Hofmański, President of the Court, for his tireless leadership over the past years in very challenging times.

Madam President,

The Rome Statute turned 25 years this July. Over this time, the number of States Parties reached an impressive number of 123, and we congratulate Armenia on its decision to become the 124<sup>th</sup> State Party. This number speaks for itself in terms of support for the Court and to its mandate to end impunity for the most serious crimes. In this regard, let me reiterate that any threats or attacks against the Court and its elected officials, its personnel and all those cooperating with it are unacceptable and must be strongly condemned. The independence of the Court to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole in all situations is a fundamental principle that needs to be defended and upheld.

The International Criminal Court as a court of last resort is fully based on the principle of complementarity. We welcome deepening the engagement of the Office of the Prosecutor with national authorities and other stakeholders in respective countries in order to close the impunity gap. We are of the opinion that this is the correct approach to complementarity, which will result in decreasing the overall financial and capacity burden placed on the Court in the long term, and the strengthening of national capacities should thus have a positive impact on the efficiency of the work of the Court.

The principles of complementarity and cooperation are mutually dependent. Full cooperation with the Court in its investigation and prosecution of crimes within the Court's jurisdiction is not only a legal obligation stemming from the Rome Statute or the United Nations Security Council resolutions, but a necessary precondition for holding trials before the Court. We note that cooperation remains a challenge. In this regard, we

wish to point out that when the instances of non-cooperation occur, we should jointly work both on the non-repetition of such conduct, as well as on a proper reaction. Furthermore, a broader meaning of collaboration itself is a multifaceted area, which involves various partners and activities, including practical means such as the use of technology, aiming at increasing capacity of the Court to deal with demanding and complex situations within its jurisdiction.

Madam President,

With respect to the crime of aggression, we note with great interest the efforts to re-examine its jurisdictional regime for future situations, and we are ready to participate actively and constructively in this endeavour. The bottom line here should be ending impunity for this leadership crime in all situations for the future.

Last, but not least, we acknowledge the work of the Trust Fund for Victims to which the Czech Republic has been contributing since 2011. Supporting the work of the Trust Fund provides further means how to assist the Court to fulfil its mandate. Finally, and most importantly, justice for victims is the *raison d'être* of the Court.

Thank you.